



# LAND ACCESS FOR WOMEN

JULY 2014 – NOVEMBER 2018 | IMPLEMENTERS: INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON WOMEN (ICRW), INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT STUDIES (ISDS) | PLANNED BUDGET: \$1,400,000

While a legal framework for female land ownership in Vietnam exists, it is often thwarted by both men's and women's general lack of awareness of Vietnam's property rights laws and lack of resources to enforce women's property rights at the provincial level. As a result, women's access to land rights is limited. The Land Access for Women project combines commune-level legal rights counseling and education with advocacy efforts to empower farmers, especially women, to exercise their rights to land.

The project works in two provinces to increase awareness of existing land rights under current legislation; facilitate farmers' ability to access their land rights; generate evidence about gender-specific barriers to realizing land rights in rural areas; and increase the capacity of social and mass organizations to advocate for the gender equitable implementation of land regulations, as well as for legal revisions when necessary to achieve this. The project is implemented by the Institute for Social Development Studies, as the local partner of the International Center for Research on Women, which is sharing its tools and lessons learned from a similar, previously implemented community-based approach in Uganda.

## UNDERSTANDING BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS

A household-level study conducted by the project to determine farmers' ability to access land and solve land-related conflicts at the commune level demonstrates that despite the legislative measures to improve women's access to land, women continue to face multiple disadvantages compared to their male counterparts. Traditional practices, pressure from the family, and lack of knowledge about the system and process of claiming land rights are major barriers to closing the gap between what the law states and its implementation.

## LEGAL RIGHTS COUNSELLING AND EDUCATION

The centerpiece of the project is the mobilization and training of 106 community volunteers for gender equality from across the two provinces. Community volunteers conduct land rights awareness-raising activities as well as provide legal counseling to individuals, mitigate land disputes, and offer referrals to navigate existing legal structures.

## RESULTS

By the end of September 2018, Community Volunteers had advised nearly 12,000 clients on land rights issues, resulting in more than 3,300 resolved land-related cases, of which approximately 95 percent were in favor of the clients. Because of these efforts, more women were able to inherit land and were listed on the Land Use Rights Certificates. Both men and women who participated in the project showed changed attitudes about women's equal access to social, political, and economic resources and opportunities.

*In the photo: A woman dries incense which helps support her family. (ISDS)*